For Immediate Release   Contact: Erica Daughtrey

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Washington, D.C.- On March 23, 2010, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced federal disaster aid for New Jersey to supplement state and local recovery efforts in response to a severe winter snowstorm in early February 2010. Yesterday, Congressman Sires joined his colleagues in the House of Representatives in passing H.R. 4899, the Disaster Relief and Summer Jobs Act by a vote of 239 to 175. This bill would provide $5.1 billion in aid to help disaster-stricken communities rebuild their homes, infrastructure and local economies and protect them from future disasters.

"Like many areas throughout the country, New Jersey was hit hard by severe weather this winter. I am pleased to hear that funding from FEMA will be available to help our state recover from these destructive storms," said Congressman Sires. "Today's passage of supplemental funding for disaster relief will not only provide New Jersey the funds it needs to overcome last month's snowstorm, but it will also provide New Jersey with the support it needs to ensure that the state is prepared in the event of future disasters."

New Jersey estimates that the state will need $11.2 million in disaster assistance from the

federal government. The disaster relief funding in H.R.4899 would allow FEMA to continue helping communities nationwide in responding to federally declared disasters. This bill would also fund the approximately $2 billion in FEMA projects that have been put on hold due to great need for emergency assistance, $12.6 million of which are in New Jersey. In addition to these projects, this funding would ready the nation for the possibility of spring flooding and other natural disasters.

"With the snow in February coupled with the flooding in March, this legislation is critical to rebuilding the New Jersey communities impacted by these storms," said Congressman Sires.

H.R.4899 also would expand summer youth jobs opportunities, supporting an additional 300,000 summer jobs, and extend key Recovery Act provisions to make small business loans more affordable and available.

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